

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 7th May 2026

Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), held in the meeting room at the Southern IFCA office in Poole at **14:00 on Thursday 7th May 2026**.

Present

Dr Antony Jensen	Chairman, MMO Appointee
Mr Richard Stride	Vice Chairman, MMO Appointee
Dr Heidi Guille	MMO Appointee
Mr Colin Francis	MMO Appointee
Mr Rob Milton	MMO Appointee
Mr Mark Cornwell	MMO Appointee
Mr Neil Hornby	MMO Appointee
Mr Tom Havelock	Marine Management Organisation
Mr Stuart Kingston-Turner	Environment Agency
Dr Richard Morgan	Natural England
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO) Sam Dell, Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Dr Sarah Birchenough, IFCA's Ms Hester Churchouse, Ms Celie Mullen, Mr William Meredith-Davies, Ms Chelsea Perrins and PO Ms Imogen Wright were also present.

Ms Alison Ruscoe and Mr Steve Boyd were present in the public gallery. Mr Peter Morgan (Angling Trust) attended virtually.

Apologies

30. Apologies for absence were received from Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones (MMO Appointee) and Dr Simon Cripps (MMO Appointee).

Declarations of interest

31. The following pecuniary interests were declared: Mr Rob Milton (Agenda Items 7, 8 and 9).

Minutes

32. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on the 5th of February 2026 (Marked A). The minutes were approved by mutual consent.

PROGRESS REPORTS

33. Emergent Updates

The CEO informed Members that the EFRA (Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) Committee report had been published at the end of April, titled 'Resetting the Relationship with Fishing Communities'. The report sets out how Defra can help the UK fishing industry recover after what has been described as a series of avoidable failures in communication and policy design. The CEO noted that IFCA's are not mentioned in the report or recognised for local and collective national contributions, the focus being on Defra and the MMO. Members were informed that the report calls for Government to develop a strategic framework for managing competing demands in inshore and offshore waters, noting a loss of confidence from the fishing industry in the relevant departments there to support them. The report also calls on the MMO to resume the publication of enforcement statistics and that the proposed framework required should be collaborative with the fishing community at its heart, including a formal mechanism enabling the community to participate in decisions that affect them. The CEO

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outlined that the report also recommends that Defra establish a UK-wide network of Regional Fisheries Management Forums, comprising of fishers, marine scientists and environmental organisations. The CEO reflected that this recommendation is very similar to the IFCA model.

The CEO informed Members that the AIFCA are preparing a response on behalf of the IFCAs to the Fisheries APPG Call for Evidence, providing an opportunity for IFCAs to be proactive and constructive in the national picture. The Fisheries APPG launched the Call for Evidence to help shape a long-term fisheries action plan, calling for recognition of the inshore sector and its foundations in the community, as well as the impact that a loss of this sector would have. The CEO outlined six key themes and the associated suggested actions which are part of this Call for Evidence, covering fleet resilience, fairness in management, coastal communities, governance, evidence, people and investment.

The CEO stated that the Community Drop-In Surgeries held over the past 16 months have now concluded, with the Chair, Chair of the TAC, the CEO, the PDCO and DCO attending the final Surgeries in Mudeford & Lymington and Portsmouth & Warsash. The CEO informed Members that outputs of these cross-District sessions are currently being reviewed with an intention to provide more information at the June Authority meeting.

The CEO informed Members that Local Elections were taking place today which could have implications for the current Authority elected membership across 5 of the 6 relevant Local Authorities, with only Dorset Council not holding elections. The CEO reflected that this provides some positive continuity with the two elected Members from Dorset Council, Cllr Hughes and Cllr Wheller.

34. Marine Licence Application – Durlston Head to Hurst Spit Beach Sediments

DCO Birchenough informed Members that Southern IFCA, as a consultee for Marine Licence Applications (MLAs) relevant to the District, had been consulted on MLA/2025/00553 – Area 2105 MLA for beach sediments Durlston Head to Hurst Spit. DCO Birchenough outlined that the MLA had been submitted by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council, proposing dredging works in a defined area over Dolphin Sands and Shingle Bank to obtain sediment for beach replenishment within the region. DCO Birchenough stated that Southern IFCA have submitted a response to the consultation on this MLA, raising serious concerns with the proposed works, with the potential for impacts on fisheries of commercial and recreational importance that would result in negative social, economic, cultural and community effects, and the overall sustainability of the inshore, small-scale fishing fleet in the Poole Bay and Christchurch Bay areas. To inform the consultation response, Southern IFCA had engaged with representatives of the commercial and recreational sectors through the South Coast Fishermen's Council, Poole & District Fishermen's Association and the Poole and District Sea Angling Association. DCO Birchenough informed Members that the response set out recommendations based on reviewing the application and associated documentation, any identified inaccuracies, points where further clarity is requested, points and concerns raised by the stakeholder community and general comments which concerned the process and consultation on the application. DCO Birchenough outlined that the MMO would review all consultation responses received and that Southern IFCA expected to receive further communication in due course on the outcome of the consultation and any next steps.

Members discussed responses to the consultation from other statutory authorities, including Natural England, and where additional data may be available to inform the application including historic sediment data from that area. It was discussed that in addition to Southern IFCA, both Natural England and the local MMO team had also raised significant concerns with the proposals.

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35. Black Seabream Co-Developed Principles – delivery in the field

DCO Birchenough provided Members with an overview of the development process for the Black Seabream Co-Developed Principles, developed with the Dorset Community across the Purbeck Coast Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Poole Rocks MCZ and Southbourne Rough MCZ as an additional management opportunity to complement statutory protections and to advance understandings of black seabream fisheries over time.

DCO Birchenough informed Members that the focus of Year 1 of implementation, from 1st April 2026, is engagement, raising awareness and seeking compliance. Southern IFCA have produced engagement materials to support the implementation of the Co-Developed Principles using both electronic and paper formats to support wider engagement. All fishers and charter businesses who are engaged with black seabream fisheries in the three Dorset MCZs have also been invited to become Black Seabream Custodians via displaying a sticker on their vessel, and/or adding information to their business website. Any organisation, business or community group who would like to promote their support for the initiative have also been invited to have their logo displayed on the Southern IFCA black seabream webpage.

DCO Birchenough outlined that engagement materials have been disseminated through email and in-person engagement with all relevant sectors, supported by attendance at stakeholder meetings. Southern IFCA have engaged by email with 151 recipients and in-person with 80 recipients. A new webpage has also been developed to host all information relating to the management of black seabream and a new Google Maps Interactive Tool has been made live, to be used by all stakeholders to understand the location of spatial regulations within the District that are applicable to multiple sectors, including the Co-Developed Principles.

PDCO Dell informed Members that work on the coast has been carried out through shore patrols, port visits and sea patrols, both inside and outside of the three MCZs, including the collection of fisher-independent data from 16 vessels to date operating within the MCZs to support the Data Collection Programme. To date 56% of those engaged through at-sea inspections were aware of the Co-Developed Principles and those that were not have been provided with engagement materials. Officers have also been gathering feedback from all sectors on the Co-Developed Principles and their implementation.

DCO Birchenough outlined that Southern IFCA will continue to work closely with the Dorset Community through the recognised breeding season (Apr-Jul) and the first annual review will commence after the breeding season ends.

Dr H Guille commented on evidence gaps that had been identified through the development process and queried if any funding had been identified to address these. DCO Birchenough outlined that funding opportunities continued to be explored by relevant academic institutions to further tagging work done on black seabream, but nothing had been confirmed to date. DCO Birchenough commented that the Seabream FMP would hopefully support filling evidence gaps. Dr Guille suggested that the Fisheries and Coastal Growth Fund could be an avenue to explore for funding.

Mr C Francis informed Members that the majority of the recreational angling sector were in favour of the Co-Developed Principles. There were some stakeholders who felt that the measures should be statutory, but the engagement materials and stickers have been welcomed and are readily being used. Recreational stakeholders generally seem happy with the slot size in the Co-Developed Principles.

The Chairman invited Mr Peter Morgan from the Angling Trust to provide a comment. Mr P Morgan stated that the Co-Developed Principles had generally been well received and accepted within the recreational sea angling community. He stated that the community want

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to protect and conserve the species and can see the benefits of the management approach being taken.

36. End of Season Spotlight: Scallop Fishing in the Solent (November 2025-March 2026)

DCO Birchenough provided an initial overview of this agenda item and the subsequent papers and inputs to follow. Following the conclusion of the 2025/26 Solent Scallop Fishery on 31st March 2026, the performance of the fishery could be considered following the introduction of additional effort management, in the form of a reduction in daily fishing hours from 08:00-16:00 to 08:00-14:00, in response to Member's consideration of data from the Solent Scallop Survey and the identified need to explore additional effort controls to support a sustainable fishery. DCO Birchenough outlined that the fishery's performance is informed by compliance & enforcement, Fishery Performance Indicators, and insights from a Permit Holder who was active in the scallop fishery.

DCO Birchenough provided an overview of the background on the Solent scallop fishery, covering the development of management and PDCO Dell provided Members with geographic information, fleet dynamics, an overview of regulatory tools (both national and local), current management measures, fishing gear used in the fishery, and the compliance approach taken.

DCO Birchenough presented on the first aspect of the fishery, the introduction of a new Category A Permit Condition in November 2025, providing Members with an overview of the drivers and process for introducing additional effort controls in the Solent Scallop Fishery ahead of the 2025/26 season to support a sustainable fishery. DCO Birchenough outlined that, following the autumn post-season Solent Scallop Survey in 2025 and a full analysis for Solent Scallop Survey Data for 2024-2025, a number of key points (detailed in the agenda item report) were identified which formed a driver for actioning a review of permit conditions, permit fees and limitations on the number of permits under a Category A Solent Dredge Permit. DCO Birchenough gave an overview of the review process and opportunities for stakeholders to participate through consultation and the resolution at an Extraordinary meeting of the TAC to reduce fishing effort to support a sustainable fishery through a reduction in daily fishing hours from 08:00-16:00 to 08:00-14:00.

PDCO Dell presented to Members on in-season compliance with the additional effort management giving an overview of the compliance statistics (detailed in the agenda item report), including the numbers of patrols and inspections carried out as well as the recording of 77 sightings of fishing vessels engaged in the Solent scallop fishery, the submission of 10 intelligence reports related to suspected non-compliance, and the occurrence of 5 Offence Reports resulting from instances of non-compliance, relating to the issuing of 2 Fixed Administrative Penalties with 3 investigations ongoing. PDCO Dell outlined that during the season, non-compliance in the Solent Scallop Fishery was identified across 4 vessels with 3 demonstrating non-compliance on 2 occasions. Senior IFCO Adam Parry provided input to Members from an on-the-ground perspective, stating that overall, the fleet had responded well to the additional management with feedback that the rationale was understood and that it was beneficial that November had been kept open for this season. Senior IFCO Parry outlined that most of the fleet have robust measures in place to support compliance with minimum conservation reference size (MCRS) regulations, including setting gauges bigger than the MCRS of 110mm, and having bottom towed fishing gear (BTFG) closed areas on plotters. Senior IFCO Parry reflected that there were detections of non-compliance relating to BTFG closed areas and one instance of breaching the new curfew, but that use of the drone was beneficial in this regard as well as ongoing work with IFCO Payton to provide BTFG prohibition area waypoints for uploading onto fishers' plotters. Senior IFCO Parry outlined that the majority of the fishers welcomes the presence of the patrol vessel and boarding teams during the season with minimal disruption to fishing activities. Joint working opportunities were also

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explored with the MMO, allowing for communication across multiple objectives and remits. Senior IFCO Parry noted that good catches were reported from the start of the season in November, with catch levels trailing off towards the end of the season with most vessels turning to other fishing methods in the month of March.

IFCO Churchouse presented to Members on Fishery Performance Indicators, including both fisher-dependent data from Permit Holder submitted catch returns during the season and fisher-independent data from the Southern IFCA Monitoring Programme through the Solent Scallop Survey carried out three times per year, and a Mid-Season Observer Programme, implemented for the first time in 2026. IFCO Churchouse provided Members with an overview of data on fishery participation, noting that 40 out of 49 eligible applicants took out their Category A Permit for the 2025/26 season, with 26 Permit Holders in total active within the Solent Scallop Fishery, 20 of which worked consistently (present in the fishery for 3 or more months) and 10 working for 5 days or more in each of 3 months or more during the season. IFCO Churchouse provided an overview of Scallop catch levels and LPUE during the season, noting a 39.5% decrease in total tonnage compared to the 2024/25 season (241.8 tonne to 400.1 tonne), with the total caught lower than all previous seasons except 2022/23. IFCO Churchouse covered the geographical distribution of catches and the analysis of catch data as Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE), looking at variations within and between seasons, with LPUE lower than in the 2023/24 season, and the November LPUE being lower than all previous seasons except 2022/23.

IFCO Churchouse provided a verbal overview on early reflections from the February and April Solent Scallop Surveys and the Mid-Season Observer Programme. Regarding the Solent Scallop Survey, IFCO Churchouse outlined that the initial results appeared positive with improvements in Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) in the spring 2026 survey compared to the previous two springs and more increases than decreases in CPUE at site level comparing between spring 2025, autumn 2025 and the spring 2026 survey. IFCO Churchouse noted that scallop length was increased in the spring survey compared to the previous year but that this was not consistent with other previous surveys and that the proportion of scallops over MCRS was lower in some areas than previously seen with larger numbers of under MCRS scallops being seen.

Permit Holder Mr Steve Boyd, who has actively worked in the Solent Scallop Fishery during the 2025/26 season, was invited to address Members to provide an insight into reflections on the 2025/26 season and expert observations on potential gear management solutions which could further support the ongoing sustainability of the fishery. Mr Boyd spoke about the condition of scallops and that the current industry standard N-Viro dredge was helping to reduce impact to the condition of scallop in The Solent which contributes to keeping catch rates up throughout the season. Mr Boyd expressed some concern regarding the number of vessels operating in the fishery and that this may adversely impact the scallop condition in the longer term, expressing concerns regarding predators such as whelk being able to feed on damaged scallops and overall increases in mortality. Mr Boyd stated that there could be further changes made to the scallop dredges used in the fishery, such as having a ladder system similar to an oyster dredge which would not require teeth and therefore have benefits for both the marine environment and the stock, and that there could be benefit in having a specific dredge design for The Solent fishery to promote continued innovation for sustainable fishing. It was recognised that changes to the gear type used in The Solent may have short-term economic impacts but that overall, there would be long-term benefits. Mr Boyd also commented on the relationship between the Solent scallop fishery and the Manila clam fishery and how the level of fishing effort in one or the other in a given year can influence effort levels in each fishery in subsequent years, emphasising the need to monitor fishing effort in this regard to ensure that both fisheries can remain sustainable. Mr Boyd re-emphasised the importance of the fishing gear, commenting on the inability to use a pump-scoop dredge within

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The Solent and that fishers would like the ability to use this gear type as a more environmentally friendly form of dredge to fish for Manila clam. The CEO commented that work has been done to investigate this matter further with detailed outputs and summaries of current findings provided to the Authority within the last 12 months. At present significant resource would be required to address the data and evidence gaps to inform the potential to progress this matter further.

DCO Birchenough concluded by outlining that Southern IFCA seeks to continue exploring ways in which the Solent Scallop Fishery can be developed to ensure a sustainable fishery is maintained, and to explore where improvements to the fishery can be made to support both the marine environment and the socioeconomics of the Scallop fishers, recognising the intrinsic links between this fishery and local coastal communities. DCO Birchenough outlined that Southern IFCA are committed to commencing a wider review of the management of dredge fishing in The Solent in the 2026/27 Financial Year and will also be delivering the Solent Scallop Research Programme.

Members discussed the use of different gear types with input from PDCO Dell on the relevant regulations and the requirements that these impose, emphasising the partnership working between Southern IFCA, the MMO and the fishing industry in delivery within The Solent fishery. Members also discussed potential avenues for future research which may aid in understanding the use of different types of fishing gear and associated impacts. The CEO outlined the research that is planned to take place to further understand fishing gear used in the Solent Scallop Fishery and that this will be delivered during the current Financial Year. The CEO also outlined that the Authority would be seeking to further investigate the potential for gear innovation, noting the factors that would need to be considered in this regard including marine protected area management and existing national regulations.

Mr M Cornwell queried whether The Solent scallop fishery overlapped with a whelk fishery. Members discussed that there is overlap between the two fisheries, and whether there is any impact from this, for example potential toxicity from crab bait used in whelk fisheries which could then possibly impact scallop but noting that this is not something that has been observed in The Solent. DCO Birchenough informed Members that dead scallop shell had previously been sent to Cefas for analysis, and no attributable cause had been found.

Mr N Hornby reflected that the decision taken to introduce additional management measures in challenging circumstances had appeared to have been beneficial on the stock from the evidence presented and that this is additionally positive due to the collaborative process undertaken with industry to deliver this.

Dr H Guille commented that other scallop stocks nationally are seemingly not doing well, and this emphasises the importance of the good work done in The Solent. Dr Guille also reflected on the wider context, referencing the objectives of the King Scallop FMP for harvest control rules and management of scallop stocks and that this is already being delivered in The Solent, as well as the objective relating to fishing gear improvements to support sustainability and the marine environment, stating that this would be a key driver in being able to continue to explore factors relating to fishing gear in this fishery. Dr Guille also referenced the UK Scallop Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) which Southern IFCA are involved with, that includes many of the same objectives, with slightly more of an industry focus.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

37. The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 – Management Plan (2026 Update)

IFCO Meredith-Davies presented to Members the 2026 Update to the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (The Order) Management Plan: 2025 Revision, outlining that an annual review of

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the Management Plan is required to be carried out under the terms of The Order.

IFCO Meredith-Davies informed Members that for the 2026 review only inconsequential updates to grammar and sentence structure had been identified as being required and therefore the review did not seek to introduce any significant changes to the Management Plan. IFCO Meredith-Davies stated that if the 2026 Update is agreed, the review and outcomes will be referenced in the Management Plan and the 2026 Update version made available on the Southern IFCA website in accordance with the requirements under The Order.

The recommendations were proposed by Mr R Stride and seconded by Mr S Kingston-Turner. Nine Members voted in favour, Mr R Milton and Mr T Havelock abstained.

Resolved

38. That Members agree that no updates are required to the Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan: 2025 Revision (2026 Update).

39. That Members approve that the Management Plan: 2025 Revision (2025 Update) is published on the Southern IFCA website.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

40. Several/Regulating Order (SRO) Defra Review Outcome

DCO Birchenough informed Members that the Aquaculture and Policy Team at Defra had previously contacted Southern IFCA as the grantee of The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (The Order) to inform of upcoming changes to the way Defra process all future Several and Regulating Order applications, specifically relating to cost recovery for expenses incurred in relation to new applications. Southern IFCA formally responded to this consultation in February 2025 providing information on the importance of aquaculture in Poole Harbour, its history and the ecosystem benefits provided by the sector, detail of how The Order is managed and delivered by Southern IFCA, concerns over implications for cost recovery on the Authority and Leaseholders, the risk of loss of aquaculture activity and the beneficial services provided if cost recovery cannot be managed to minimise impact to operators and regulators, and suggested considerations on timescale, avoiding creating barriers to entry and cross-organisational working with associated funding potential.

DCO Birchenough outlined that the outcome of the consultation had been received with five responses provided by regulators and industry representatives. Members were informed that Defra had confirmed arrangements for payment schedules of associated costs at approximately £35,000 per Order at 2026 rates. It was outlined that where Several/Regulating Orders are held by IFCAs, Defra would expect IFCAs to recover the costs from the beneficiaries of the Order and an alternative route would be for IFCAs to use flexible permitting byelaws.

DCO Birchenough outlined the implications for Southern IFCA, that there would be no change under the life of the current Order which expires on 1st July 2035 and that post this date, there would be costs incurred for either the seeking of a new Order or the development of a Byelaw. It was outlined that the Association of IFCAs intends to raise concerns regarding this matter with the Shellfish Association of Great Britain and it was recommended that the appropriate route for future management of aquaculture by the Authority be considered in conjunction with stakeholders during the 2028-29 Financial Year.

Members discussed the policy context of this and where the need to explore such a process may have arisen from. Members discussed that taking a byelaw management route would require considerations of the timeframes required to make a byelaw and have it ratified by the Secretary of State. It was also discussed that aquaculture does require suitable and

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appropriate management to support a sustainable industry and whether costs could be spread over multiple years, in addition Members discussed cost comparisons between an Order and a Byelaw. The CEO outlined that it is difficult to quantify the cost for developing a permitting byelaw but that quantifying costs of other regulations developed in the interim helps to provide an indication. The CEO also outlined that discussions would take place with existing Leaseholders and any other interested parties at the appropriate time and that Southern IFCA would review what process other authorities may choose to follow for Orders which expire sooner.

41. Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw: Monitoring & Control Plan Outputs 2025/26 Season

IFCO Mullen presented Members with the outputs from the On-Site Monitoring Programme (MCP) under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw Monitoring and Control Plan ahead of the 2026/27 fishing season. IFCO Mullen provided an explanation of how the MCP had been developed and the relevant Monitoring Variables under the On-Site Monitoring Programme.

IFCO Mullen outlined that for the landings data Monitoring Variable, measured as Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE) (kg/day) calculated from landings data from monthly catch returns submitted by Permit Holders for the 2025/26 season, the Threshold Trigger Level (TTL) had not been reached, with the average LPUE value for the season being 83.52 kg/day (TTL = 78.25 kg/day). IFCO Mullen informed Members that while below the current lowest rolling 5-year average, the average LPUE for 2025/26 was 15.34% higher than for 2024/25.

IFCO Mullen informed Members that for the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey Monitoring Variable, measured as Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) (kg/m of dredge/hour) calculated from data obtained during the 2026 annual survey, the TTL had not been reached, with the average CPUE being 43.79 kg/m of dredge/hr (TTL = 34.60 kg/m of dredge/hr). IFCO Mullen outlined that whilst the average CPUE value was below the current lowest 5-year rolling average, it was 0.7% higher than for the 2025 survey.

IFCO Mullen informed Members that, based on the LPUE TTL and CPUE TTL having not been reached, it was recommended that no additional management is required to support a sustainable Manila clam fishery for the 2026/27 season and gave an overview of the process of issuing permits and the In-Season Monitoring Programme which will run through the 2026/27 season. IFCO Mullen also outlined that under the review of permit conditions proposed for this Financial Year, the Monitoring Variables under the MCP would be reviewed, including the potential to add in TTLs for Common Cockle, to ensure that the TTLs continue to reflect robust evidence from the fishery and any annual changes.

42. Fisheries Management Plans

PO Wright provided an overview of the matters captured in the Executive Summary, providing updates on the Bass Fisheries Management Plan (FMP), Whelk FMP and Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP. PO Wright provided an overview of the four Tranche 4 FMPs currently under consultation, the Wrasses Complex FMP, Seabream FMP, Celtic Sea and Western Channel Demersal FMP and Celtic Sea and Western Channel Pelagic FMP, outlining the proposed goals and actions. PO Wright provided a summary of the points contained in the consultation responses that had been submitted by Southern IFCA, thanking Members and stakeholders for their input.

PO Wright informed Members that a public consultation on Scottish led demersal FMPs had concluded in March 2026, with three of the FMPs being relevant to the Southern IFCA District; the Northern Shelf Cod FMP, the Northern Shelf Hake FMP and the North Sea and Eastern

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Channel Whiting FMP. PO Wright provided an overview of the comments made in Southern IFCA's joint consultation response to all three of these FMPs, with the full response provided as an annex to this agenda item. PO Wright outlined that there are also three relevant pelagic FMPs being led by Scottish Government as Joint UK FMPs; the Northern Shelf Mackerel FMP (covering the whole Southern IFCA District), the North Sea Herring FMP (covering the eastern part of the District under ICES area 7d), and the Northern Shelf Blue Whiting FMP (covering the whole Southern IFCA District). PO Wright informed Members that Southern IFCA had attended a pre-consultation event on these FMPs with public consultation timetabled for summer 2026.

Mr R Stride updated Members after a recent meeting of the Bass Management Group, outlining that research by the University of Essex had been looking at spawning periods in relation to current closed seasons with the spawning period for the majority of the coast appearing to be later than previously thought. Members discussed the potential causes of this shift including warming waters, noting that stakeholders were seeing similar on the coast to the results of the research project. Members discussed potential implications for management and whether this may be able to be integrated into the Bass FMP implementation process.

Mr N Hornby queried whether the negotiations with the EU regarding the SPS agreement had been considered in relation to the FMP process at a national level. DCO Birchenough stated that some of the work at the international level had driven a change in language used in the FMPs being drafted, recognising the need to incorporate national and international determinations into the ability to deliver actions under the FMPs. The CEO outlined that Defra have indicated that FMPs will continue to be implemented but alongside a necessary focus on wider matters such as international negotiations. The CEO informed Members that IFCA's were requesting that consideration is given during the implementation process as to the tools used for management, considering the different types of measures that can be used and the role that IFCA's can have at a local level, seeking to support national delivery but recognising different limitations of different organisations and the need to consider cross-sector implementation. Members discussed resourcing challenges around the implementation of FMPs and the potential impacts of climate change on how policy goals and actions in the FMPs can be delivered.

43. Date of Next Meeting

To confirm the date of the next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee on the 20th August 2026 at Southern IFCA, Unit 3 Holes Bay Park, Sterte Avenue West, Poole Dorset BH15 2AA.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:37.

Chairman:



Date:

17/05/26.